Free movement of scientists from India

2691. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether US Government has removed barriers to the free movement of scientists from India in recent time; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) The United States examines visa applications of scientists working in certain scientific areas in accordance with its domestic regulations in this regard. This process also applies to Indian scientists. Following the nuclear tests in May 1998, the United States applied tighter restrictions on travel by Indian scientists to the United States.

(b) Government has been conveying the United States that such restrictions are unjustified and counter-productive to the development of scientific and technological co-operation between India and the United States that both countries desire. US scientific organisations, including the American Physical Society, voiced their concern over US restrictions on free scientific exchanges between India and the United States. As a result, a number of scientists and officials from Indian scientific organisations have travelled to the United States on official work in recent months.

Chinese reaction to the autonomy plans of Dalai Lama

2692. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the United States have recently called on China to open a dialogue with Dalai Lama about his autonomy plans of Tibet and issued a condemnation of Beijing's human right record in the region;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Chinscs authorities to the proposal; and